

**CLAIMS****WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

- 1    1.    A method for automatically generating a search query, comprising:  
2            receiving a search constraint and a control field identifier;  
3            automatically generating a search query that if executed returns first  
4 records of a data store satisfying at least a portion of the search constraint,  
5 and wherein each of the first records include a control field identifier value;  
6            automatically modifying the search query so that if the search query  
7 is executed it returns second records, wherein the second records include a  
8 number of the first records merged with one another if they include a same  
9 control field identifier value and are associated with a same customer  
10 identification value.
- 1    2.    The method of claim 1 further comprising automatically executing the  
2 search query.
- 1    3.    The method of claim 1 further comprising executing the search query  
2 after receiving a query execution command.
- 1    4.    The method of claim 1 wherein the automatically generating the  
2 search query further includes representing the search query as a Structured  
3 Query Language (SQL) query.
- 1    5.    The method of claim 4 wherein the receiving further includes  
2 receiving the search constraint and the control field identifier for purposes of  
3 generating the search query that when executed returns a customer  
4 segmentation population for a marketing campaign from the data store.
- 1    6.    The method of claim 5 wherein the receiving further includes a travel  
2 customer segmentation population for a travel campaign.

1 7. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing unique customer  
2 identification values associated with the second records when the search  
3 query is executed.

1 8. A method for providing a search query, comprising:  
2 providing an Application Programming Interface (API) for receiving a  
3 search constraint and a control field identifier; and  
4 providing a search generating module interfaced to the API for  
5 automatically generating a search query from the search constraint and the  
6 control field identifier;  
7 wherein if the search query is executed records from a data store are  
8 returned representing data store records that satisfy the search constraint  
9 and have identical values for the control field identifier for each customer  
10 identification value.

1 9. The method of claim 8 further comprising providing a command  
2 option within the API to manually execute the search query.

1 10. The method of claim 9 further comprising presenting the records  
2 when the command option is selected.

1 11. The method of claim 8 wherein the providing of the search generating  
2 module further includes interfacing the API to the search generating module  
3 over a network.

1 12. The method of claim 8 wherein the providing the API further includes  
2 interfacing the API to one or more automated applications.

1 13. The method of claim 8 further comprising interfacing the records  
2 automatically after the search query is executed to a marketing campaign

3 module.

1 14. The method of claim 8 further comprising generating hierarchies from  
2 portions of the records when the search query is executed, wherein each  
3 hierarchy represents an aspect of the search constraint.

1 15. A search query generation system, comprising:  
2 a search query interface; and  
3 a search generating module;  
4 wherein the search query interface is operable to receive a search  
5 constraint and a control field identifier, and wherein the search generating  
6 module generates a search query by using the search constraint and control  
7 field identifier to return records of a data store that satisfy the search  
8 constraint and have identical values for the control field identifier when  
9 associated with a same customer identification value.

1 16. The search query generation system of claim 15 wherein the search  
2 query interface includes a Graphical User Interface (GUI) application for  
3 receiving the search constraint and the control field identifier and an  
4 Application Programming Interface (API) that interfaces the GUI application  
5 to the search generating module.

1 17. The search query generation system of claim 15 wherein the search  
2 generating module automatically executes the search query and presents  
3 the records to the search query interface.

1 18. The search query generation system of claim 15 wherein the search  
2 generating module executes the search query and presents the records to  
3 the search query interface when instructed to do so by the search query  
4 interface.

1 19. The search query generation system of claim 18 wherein the search  
2 query interface assembles and links the records after the search query is  
3 executed into logically related hierarchies and presents the hierarchies  
4 within the search query interface.

1 20. The search query generation system of claim 19 wherein the  
2 hierarchies are linked to fields in the data store and can be activated from  
3 the search query interface to present different views of the hierarchies.

1 21. A search query generation system comprising:  
2 a data store; and  
3 a search generating module that generates a search query;  
4 wherein the search generating module uses a search constraint and  
5 a control field identifier to construct the search query, and the search query  
6 when executed returns records from the data store that satisfy the search  
7 constraint and have identical values for the control field identifier for a same  
8 customer identification value.

1 22. The search query generation system of claim 21 wherein the system  
2 is interfaced to a customer segmentation module.

1 23. The search query generation system of claim 21 wherein the system  
2 is used to generate a travel customer segmentation population based on a  
3 marketing campaign's search constraint representing an instance of the  
4 search constraint and wherein the control field identifier is a trip identifier.

1 24. The search query generation system of claim 23 wherein the  
2 marketing campaign's search constraint includes at least one of a hotel stay  
3 constraint, a rental car constraint, a destination constraint, and a layover  
4 constraint.